IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A method for recognizing speech, comprising:

receiving an input speech signal,

preprocessing said input speech signal in order to thereby generate a preprocessed speech signal,

performing speech recognition with respect to said preprocessed speech signal in order to generate a recognition result, and

outputting said recognition result,

wherein in said preprocessing, a step of performing a variance normalization is applicable to the received speech signal, said preprocessing includes:

performing a statistical analysis of said speech signal, thereby generating and providing statistical evaluation data,

generating a normalization degree data from said statistical evaluation data, and

performing said variance normalization on said speech signal in accordance with said normalization degree data – in particular with a normalization strength corresponding to said normalization degree data, with normalization strength corresponding to said normalization degree data with normalization degree data having a value or values being 0 with respect to a given threshold value indicating that no variance normalization has to be performed,

wherein said variance normalization is performed by multiplying said speech signal, a derivative and/or a component thereof with a reduction factor being a function of said statistical evaluation data, in particular of the signal noise, and the normalization degree data, in particular of the normalization degree values (Dj) in a frequency-dependent manner, and

wherein a reduction factor is used having the frequency-dependent form

$$R = 1/(1 + (\sigma - 1) \cdot D)$$

with σ denoting the temporal standard deviation of the speech signal, its derivative, a component and/or a feature thereof and D denotes the normalization degree value.

Claim 2 (Previously Presented): The method according to Claim 1,

wherein said statistical analysis is performed in an at least piecewise or partial frequency-dependent manner.

Claim 3 (Previously Presented): The method according to Claim 1,

wherein said evaluation data and/or said normalization data are generated so as to reflect at least a piecewise frequency dependency.

Claim 4 (Previously Presented): The method according to Claim 1,

wherein said statistical analysis includes a step of determining signal-to-noise ratio data, in particular in a frequency-dependent manner.

Claim 5 (Previously Presented): The method according to Claim 1,

wherein a set of discrete normalization degree values (Dj) is used as said normalization degree data, in particular each discrete normalization degree value being assigned to a certain frequency interval (fj, Δfj), and said intervals (fj, Δfj) having essentially no overlap.

Claim 6 (Previously Presented): The method according to Claim 5,

wherein each of said discrete normalization degree values (Dj) has a value within the interval of 0 and 1.

Claim 7 (Previously Presented): The method according to Claim 1,

wherein in each case, a normalization degree value (Dj) being 0 indicates to skip any variance normalization for the respective assigned frequency interval (fj, Δfj).

Claim 8 (Previously Presented): The method according to Claim 1,

wherein in each case, a normalization degree value (Dj) being 1 with respect to a given threshold value indicates to perform a maximum variance normalization for the respective assigned frequency interval (fj, Δfj).

Claim 9 (Previously Presented): The method according to Claim 1,

wherein a transfer function between said statistical evaluation data and said normalization degree data is used for generating said normalization degree data from said statistical evaluation data.

Claim 10 (Previously Presented): The method according to Claim 9,

wherein a piecewise continuous, continuous or continuous differentiable function is used as said transfer function, so as to particularly achieve a smooth and/or differentiable transfer between said statistical evaluation data and said normalization degree data.

Claim 11 (Previously Presented): The method according to Claim 9,

wherein a theta-function, or a sigmoidal function, is employed as said transfer function.

Claims 12-13 (Canceled).